



NEWS RELEASE

REGION V PRESS OFFICE

Release Date: November 9, 2005	Contact: Carol Wilkerson (312) 353-7327
Release Number: 05-75	Internet Address: http://www.sba.gov/news

SBA Wisconsin District Director Eric Ness and Agency Senior Officials Discuss Rebuilding Efforts for the Gulf Region

MILWAUKEE– This week, SBA Wisconsin District Director Eric Ness headed to New Orleans for a joint meeting with the agency’s senior leaders to discuss development strategies for rebuilding the small business community throughout the Gulf Region.

Ness and Region V district directors from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota; Cleveland and Columbus Ohio received personal thanks for their participation from New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin and SBA Louisiana District Director Eugene Cornelius. In his remarks, Mayor Nagin highlighted what needs to be done to improve the conditions in New Orleans and the Gulf Region.

“Witnessing the amount of devastation the business community encountered and participating in this conference provided first-hand experience for each district director on how to be helpful and supportive of the disaster,” says Ness.

Among the SBA senior leaders attending the conference were Administrator Hector Barreto and Region V Administrator Patrick Rea. The SBA conference was the first major meeting since Hurricanes Rita and Katrina hit the Gulf Region.

“The hands-on knowledge learned at this conference by my district directors is invaluable and it will help them plan for any contingencies that may affect their district,” says Rea. “And, the welcome by Mayor Nagin as well as other leaders of the Gulf Coast area underscore the importance of SBA management to assist in the Gulf Coast.”

Throughout the conference, district directors had a chance to tour the New Orleans business community and participate in a business matchmaking event where firms devastated by the hurricane were introduced to contracting opportunities with federal, state and local government agencies, their prime contractors and major corporations. These participating procurement organizations will offer contract opportunities for both the rebuilding of the Gulf Coast Region, as well as ongoing procurement opportunities.

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